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PRESS RELEASE

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FORMER APD OFFICER CONVICTED ON **OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE CHARGE**

This afternoon, a federal jury convicted **Brad Ahrensfield**, 39, a former Albuquerque Police Officer, on an obstruction of justice charge after a four-day trial before Senior United States District Judge James A. Parker. Ahrensfield remains out of custody on conditions of release pending his sentencing hearing. At sentencing, Ahrensfield faces up to twenty-years imprisonment.

Ahrensfield was indicted on December 3, 2009 and charged with one count of obstruction of justice and one count of making false statements to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The charges were based on allegations that Ahrensfield had tipped off a friend, who was a target of an ongoing federal narcotics and stolen merchandise investigation, and lying to FBI agents about disclosing the investigation. In April 2010, a jury acquitted Ahrensfield on the false statements charge but failed to reach a verdict on the obstruction of justice charge. Today, a different jury returned a guilty verdict on the obstruction charge.

The evidence at trial established that, during September 18 through 23, 2009, Shawn Bryan and his company, Car Shop, were under investigation for drug trafficking, transporting stolen property, and related financial crimes by a task force operation called Operation Safe Streets led by the FBI. As part of that investigation, a confidential informant (CI), who was acting under the supervision of the task force, purchased small amounts of marijuana and cocaine from Bryan's mechanic. The investigative plan contemplated having the CI buy a quarter ounce of crack cocaine from the mechanic on September 23, 2009; arresting the mechanic without Bryan's knowledge; and having the mechanic cooperate in the investigation to expose the full scope of Bryan's criminal activities.

The undercover buy planned for September 23, 2010 had to be scuttled because Ahrensfield leaked details of the investigation to Bryan, who was his friend. According to trial testimony, late at night on September 22, 2009, Ahrensfield arranged a meeting with Bryan taking precautions not to use his own cell phone or his own car. Rather than meeting at one of their homes or a public place, Ahrensfield instructed Bryan to put on a cap, leave his cell phone at home, leave his neighborhood, and walk east along a particular street. Ahrensfield picked up Bryan and drove around the city in the dark as he disclosed every detail of the investigation.

The following morning, Bryan told his mechanic about the investigation. Although the mechanic was arrested on September 23, 2009 as planned, the task force

could not continue its investigation because Ahrensfield had disclosed the investigation to Bryan.

Upon learning of the jury's verdict, United States Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said:

Brad Ahrensfield took an oath to serve and protect the people of Albuquerque when he joined the Albuquerque Police Department and he did so for many years. However, when he leaked sensitive law enforcement information about an ongoing drug trafficking investigation to a target of the investigation, he went from enforcing the law to breaking the law and putting his fellow officers in danger. While the vast majority of law enforcement officers carry out their difficult duties in a professional manner, my Office will not hesitate to prosecute officers like Ahrensfield who cross that line. I commend Chief Ray Schultz and the Albuquerque Police Department for supporting my Office and the FBI in the investigation and prosecution of this important case.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Tara C. Neda and investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation with assistance from the Albuquerque Police Department.

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